

A

# REVIEW

OF THE

# STATE

OF THE

# BRITISH NATION.

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Tuesday, October 4. 1709.

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I Have already introduc'd the following Discourse, with a Scheme of what has happen'd in *Scotland* between the Church and the *Episcopal Dissenters*; I must make it yet more plain, by laying down the Mater of Fact as it lies before us historically, I mean of all that has happen'd since, in and about *Edinburgh*, relating to the Suppressing of Meeting Houses in *Scotland*. But before I enter upon this Discourse, I am to premise some Things, which seem essential to the perfect Understanding the Story, and to the resolving the Difficulties about it.

And *First*, it is to be premis'd—That after all the Clamour that had been made of Persecution in *Scotland*, the *Dissenters*

there were freely permitted to keep open their Meeting-houses, not any Disturbance was offer'd them; and would they be contented with that Liberty, as was formerly us'd, I see no Reason to think, they would have met with any Disturbance at all. (Invasions and publick Dangers excepted) for the Time to come.

*Secondly*, I must premise, That as the *Episcopal* People in *Scotland* did not, when their Church was reigning in *Scotland*, receive the *English* Common-Prayer Book, or make use of it in their Churches, so the greatest Part of the *Episcopal Dissenters* now in *Scotland*, who great Pains have been taken to persuade them to embrace it, do yet reject it; some of them have preach'd against

against it—And those Meetings, that have set it up, have visibly a Decrease in their Numbers, even to a scandalous few, while the other Meetings, that refuse it, are crowded, and full.

*Thirdly*, I premise, That the Aversion of the Generality of the People in *Scotland* to the Common-Prayer is such, and so known, that no Attempt to introduce the said Common-Prayer there can prosper, *but by Force*—Which Force, as it cannot have the Law on its side, cannot be attempted, but with a Design to disturb the publick Peace, and that it ought not by the Union to be impos'd upon the *Scots* to allow a Worship among them, which is so contrary to their known Laws, and to the establish'd Worship—So it is evident, all these Attempts, of which we shall now discourse, are made purely to embroil the People, and to ferment National Aversions between the Church of *England* and the *Scots*, and to enflame and enrage the People on either side.

Having premis'd these Things, I am now to proceed to relating the Fact, and am to tell you, that the restless Party in this Island, and I shall prove before I have done, that the *South* are more concern'd in it than the *North* too, being disappointed in the Tranquillity they found growing in *Scotland*, and the Cessation of the Breach between the *Episcopal Dissenters* and the Church—found there was but one way to revive that Breach, and renew the Noise of Persecution, which they found was so much to their Advantage; and this was, to set up the Common-Prayer Book in *Scotland*.

It is true, this Attempt had once formerly embroil'd the two Nations in War and Blood, and they knew, the People of *Scotland* would not by any Means bear the Innovation—But this was far from obstructing the Attempt—I am loth to say it was rather a Motive—But it is hard to say, what other Motive they could have.

To make the Essay; a *Scots Episcopal Minister* is found, who having been, in *Ireland*, but finding but poor Living there on the Work of the Clergy, whether sent for, or coming to seek his Fortune, he comes to *Edinburgh*. Here he is receiv'd

as a proper Tool to begin the Comedy—And as if on purpose to irritate the People, he takes a House just opposite to the Cross of *Edinburgh*, where he sets up the Common-Prayer.

It was given out at first, That this was for the Use of the *English Officers* of the Customs, Excise, Exchequer, &c. who could not conform to the *Presbyterian* Worship; and indeed some of these Gentlemen were drawn in to own it—And a Subscription was propos'd to be made to raise this new Gentleman 80 *l. per Annum* for his Encouragement—to which some *English Officers* had Discretion little enough to subscribe; but they soon saw their Mistake, cancell'd their Subscription, and forsook the foolish Design—Nor shall I do them so much Injury, as it would be, to publish their Names, who very well known to me, their early abandoning the Man, having accon'd in Part for the Error.

I cannot however but note one Thing—relating to the *English Officers* in publick Employment in *Scotland*; it seems to me very reasonable, that they, who eat the Government's Bread there, ought to be such as can comply with the establish'd Church there—And if they will pretend to joyn with the Enemies of the Church of *Scotland*, who at the same time live upon *Scotland*, the Government ought to remove them, and put in those that will—Again, if no *Presbyterian* can be admitted to a Place in *England*, but he must conform to the Church of *England*—It is much more just, none of those that will joyn in the open Insults of the Church of *Scotland*, should get their Bread under the Government there—If they do not like the *Presbyterians*, why will they go there for Places? They will not admit a *Presbyterian*, as such, here, why should they send Church-men among *Presbyterians* there? 'Tis hard they will push into Places, where they will not comply with the Church, and push *Presbyterians* out of Places at home, unless they will comply with their Church; but this is a Digression, I may enlarge on it hereafter.



I return to the Fa<sup>ct</sup>, and you are to understand, that on this new Attempt of setting up the Common-Prayer Book in Scotland—The Inhabitants of *Edinburgh* address'd the Commission of the General Assembly which was then sitting, and then to the Magistrates of *Edinburgh*, that a speedy Course might be taken to put the Laws in Execution against Innovations; and particularly to prevent their setting up the Common-Prayer in *Scotland*, as what was expressly articled against in the A<sup>ct</sup> of Security for the Church of *Scotland*, which A<sup>ct</sup> was made Part of the Union.

This Application of the Inhabitants of *Edinburgh* was follow'd with others, and Addresses were preparing from several other Parts of the Kingdom, and 'tis probable, would have been very numerous—But the Commission proceeding regularly in this Affair, prevented their Application.

The Commission of the Assembly immediately made an A<sup>ct</sup>, obliging every Presbytry to make due Enquiry in their respective Bounds after Innovations, and to proceed therein according to Law.

Here follows the Address of the People of *Edinburgh* to their Magistrates upon this Affair—In our next shall be inserted the Address to the Commission of the General Assembly.

It may be observ'd that the Warmth and Forwardness of the Inhabitants of *Edinburgh* was such, that in three Hours Time, several hundred Hands of the principal Inhabitants of the City were gotten to the Paper.

Unto the Right Honourable the Lord Provost and Bailies of the City of *Edinburgh*.

The Humble Representation of the Neighbours and Inhabitants of the said City, in Prosecution of the former Addresses made by them and others, to the Reverend Commission of the late General Assembly.

Honourable and Worthy Patriots,

“Whereas our Holy Protestant Reformed Religion and Preservation thereof, in the Purity of Doctrine, Wor-

ship, Discipline, and Church-Government, from Innovations intruded without War- rant and Authority of the Holy Scriptures, the only Rule of our Faith and Life, and of Worshipping God through our Lord Jesus Christ, should be to all, and is, we hope, to many of us, dearer than our Lives.

“And whereas the same was su- per- Establish'd by the Laws of *Scotland*, after our Blessed Reformation from Popery, and by the late Happy Revolution re- stor'd to Us; And whereas Notwith- standing of our A<sup>cts</sup> of Parliament, and A<sup>ct</sup> of our late General Assembly, where our Gracious Queen *ANNE* is repre- sented by her Commissioner, and A<sup>cts</sup> of Inferiour Church Judicatories; And albeit your Honours have zealously ap- pear'd against Popery, Innovations and Delusions, yet Papists do still continue boldly to disseminate their Principles, and in the Teeth of One express A<sup>ct</sup> of Parliament to keep publick Schools, and others to set up Meeting-houses, and therein introduce Innovations according to the Church of *England*'s Liturgy; so much against the plain reiterated Laws of *Scotland*, ratifying the Doctrine, Wor- ship, Discipline, and Government of this Church, by which we have all Security Law can give us against all such Innovations, and against all Enthusiastick Principles. And those that disseminate the same, so much to the Prejudice, to the Purity of our Holy Religion.

May it therefore please your Lordship and Honours, in Consideration of the Premises, and for the Glory of God, and Security of the Peace, to put our good Laws in Execution, and to take such prudent and ef- fectual Methods, as may deliver this City and Places of your Jurisdiction from the foresaid Practices of Papists and above Innovations, and Enthu- siasts, which corrupt our Holy Re- ligion, and in such Manner as may prevent the like in Time coming.

And your Petitioners shall ever pray.

A D.



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